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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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GLEN BURNIE MAN ARRESTED FOR PRODUCING CHILD PORN VIDEO

Baltimore - Maryland. Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced today the indictment and arrest of Gordon Elliott Thomas, III, age 29, of Glen Burnie, Maryland, on federal charges for child exploitation involving the production, receipt and possession of child pornography.

According to an affidavit in support of a search warrant of Thomas' Glen Burnie apartment, Thomas ordered child pornographic videos from a man in the Philippines who had been advertising child pornography for sale on an Internet newsgroup. In September, 2002 the Filipino man was arrested by Philippine authorities. The United States Postal Inspection Service and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE") assumed the man's e-mail address and began corresponding with his customers around the world, including Thomas. In July, 2002 Thomas placed an order for child pornography and wired \$200 via Western Union as payment. On January 3, 2003 Postal and ICE investigators executed a search and seizure warrant at Thomas' Glen Burnie

apartment where computers, computer CDs, video tapes and video camera were seized.

The U.S. Attorney's Office advised United States Magistrate Judge Susan K. Gauvey that a subsequent review of the videotapes revealed footage of a 9 year old Maryland girl being molested. The U.S. Postal Inspection Service has identified the girl; her name is being withheld to protect her identity. Additionally, there were thousands of images of child pornography stored on Thomas' computer and on CDs.

Thomas was charged last week in a three-count indictment that includes a charge in Count I of child exploitation involving the production of child pornography which carries a mandatory minimum prison sentence of 10 years and a maximum of 20 years. Thomas also faces a maximum prison sentence of 15 years for each of the remaining two counts. Thomas appeared today before United States Magistrate Judge Susan Gauvey for his initial appearance. A detention hearing is scheduled for April 4, 2003 at 2:00 p.m.

The case was investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement("ICE") and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan P. Luna.